

Army Names Successor to Gen. Holmes

**Gen. W. E. Laidlaw to
Be New Commander of
Ordnance Center**

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Brig. Gen. Joel G. Holmes, commanding general of the Ordnance Ammunition Center here since 1946, will retire from the army Aug. 31, the Ordnance corps announced yesterday.

After 39 years of distinguished army service, Gen. Holmes will be succeeded as OAC chief by Brig. Gen. W. E. Laidlaw, present deputy commander of the center and former commandant of the Ordnance school at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

AS COMMANDER of the Ordnance Ammunition Center, Gen. Holmes has directed the Army's production of ordnance ammunition for the past six years. This program amounted to \$2.3 billion in the fiscal year just ended. The Center and its 22 ammunition plants and works thruout the country are responsible for nearly all U. S. production of artillery shells, rockets, bombs, mines, grenades and pyrotechnics.

More than 90,000 workers are employed at the 22 government-owned installations, all but one of which are operated by private companies under cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts.

A veteran of World Wars I and II, Gen. Holmes attended Lafayette college and graduated from the U. S. Military academy at West Point in 1917. He spent the following four years in the Coast Artillery corps, serving in France in 1918-19. After further study at the University of Minnesota, he transferred to the Ordnance corps in 1921.

SINCE THEN, Gen. Holmes' career has been highlighted by the many responsible positions he has held at Aberdeen Proving Ground, at Picatinny Arsenal, and in the Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Washington.

During World War II, he served from 1943 to 1945 as Deputy Chief Ordnance Officer of the European Theater of Operations. After the war, he was chief of the Chicago Ordnance district for one year before assuming command of the Ordnance Ammunition Center.

Decorations received by Gen. Holmes during his service include the Soldier's medal, Bronze Star, Legion of Merit and Army Commendation medal. He is also an honorary officer in the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Gen. Laidlaw, a native of Cincinnati and a former member of the Ohio National Guard, graduated from the U. S. Military academy in 1926. He served as an infantry officer for five years before transferring to the Ordnance corps in 1931, later attending Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

During World War II, he was ordnance officer of the Overseas Supply division at the New York Port of Embarkation, and directed the flow of all ordnance material to the European and Mediterranean theaters. After a year as commandant of the ordnance school at Aberdeen Proving Ground, he was named deputy commanding general of the Center July 2, 1952.